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COUNTRY: Hungary

REPORT NO.

25X1A

TOPIC: Hungarian 1st Tank Regt in Camp ESZTERGOM, Hungary

FD

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REMARKS:

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1. Subordination: 1st Tank Div in ESZTERGOM TABOR. CO of the division: Lt Col Gyula LIPTAY. The division, besides the 1st Tank Regt, presumably comprised the following units:
Motorized unit in ESZTERGOM (town)
Antiaircraft artillery unit in ESZTERGOM (town)
Self-propelled artillery unit in PILISCSABE (Q 48/H 74)
Mortar unit (location unknown)
Technical unit (location unknown)
Signal company in ESZTERGOM TABOR.
2. Location: ESZTERGOM TABOR (troop camp)
3. Officers of the Regt Hq: Col Gyula USZTA, regimental commander, Capt KONTAK, technical officer.
4. Organization: Only the I Bn with four companies of three platoons each. CO of 1 En: Capt Gyorgy TOTH.
5. EM: The regiment received about 460 recruits on 1 April 1949, at which time about two hundred EM had already been serving with the regiment for one year. About 50 percent of the 460 recruits had volunteered for service with the police and were discontent with having been inducted into a tank unit. The other 50 percent of the recruits had wanted to be enrolled at the Kossuth Academy, where, however, only a few, reliable Communist Party members had been accepted. The morale of the EM was low.
6. Armament: The I Bn was equipped with 44 "T 34" tanks which were divided evenly between the 2d and 4th Cos. The two other companies were only occasionally given tanks for training purposes. The tanks were in good mechanical condition. For the May Parade in BUDAPEST the tanks were shipped by rail. No transport and supply units were available.

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It was said that the Kossuth Academy was also equipped with about 40 "T 34" tanks. The 2d Co was equipped with 128 infantry rifles of Soviet model "48" and 12 Soviet submachine guns with drum magazines.

7. Ammunition: Each tank had an initial issue of 20 high-explosive shells, 20 armor-piercing shells and 20 special shells. The latter shells were to be used against the heaviest tanks. For a diagram of the armor-piercing shell see Annex 2.

8. Training: The recruits' training with tanks was started on 13 June 1949. Each recruits underwent five training phases: as machine gunner, as loader, as gunner, as tank driver and as tank commander. Each recruit was first trained for the function he was eventually to assume.

9. Political indoctrination: Political indoctrination lessons were given twice a day by Capt Gyula HOFFMANN and 1st Lt HOLMAR.

10. Soviet influence: Every six week the regiment was inspected by a Soviet colonel who was accompanied by Hungarian Col. Tiber KARPAKI. The Soviet officer lectured on the technique of tank combat and promised the delivery of "JS" tanks.

11. Activation of other tank units: NCOs stated that the 1st Tank Div could not be brought up to full strength because of the shortage of reliable officers. More tank units would be activated in Camp OMOKLNY (Q 48/N 78, DESKEGEN (R 48/K 40) and LISKOLC (R 49/J 87). A tank officer school was scheduled to be established in a castle in MUSZTHELY (V 4/V 40) during the fall of 1949.

Comment:

a. Although not all data contained in the report can be checked, the information on Hungarian tank troops is considered credible. Camp ESZTERGOM has, since the summer of 1948, been the training center where the Hungarian tank arm is being developed. The repeatedly confirmed 1st Tank Training Bn, which presumably became the 1 Tank Bn of the 1st Tank Regt, was located in Camp ESZTERGOM. According to previous information Maj LIPTAY was CO of the 1st Tank Training Bn. It appears doubtful that Lt Col LIPTAY should already be CO of the 1st Tank Div, whereas Col USZTA was reported to be CO of the 1st Tank Regt. Col KARPAKI, who is in charge of developing the Hungarian tank arm, was identified as major with the Organization Department of the Ministry of National Defense in September 1948. He was then responsible for the building up of the Hungarian tank arm.

b. The deserter's statements show that the Hungarian tank arm now has only about two tank battalions with about 40 tanks each. One of these battalions was attached to the Kossuth Academy.

c. The 1st Tank Regt and the 1st Tank Div can only be considered as units which are being developed.

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